

Even Start Program Elements

1. Identifying and recruiting families most in need of services as indicated by low income, low level of adult literacy or English language proficiency of the eligible parent or parents, and other need-related factors;
2. Screening and preparing parents, including teenage parents and children for full participation in the activities and services provided by the program, including testing, referral to necessary counseling, other developmental and support services, and related services;
3. Designing programs and providing support services (when unavailable from other sources) necessary for participation and appropriate to the participants' work and other responsibilities, including:
 - Scheduling and locating services to allow joint participation by parents and children;
 - Child care for the period that parents are involved in the program provided for through Even Start funds; and
 - Transporting parents and their children to enable participation in the Even Start program;
4. Establishing high-quality intensive instructional programs that promote adult literacy and empower parents to support the educational growth of their children and prepare them for success in regular school programs;
5. Assuring staff who are paid in part or in full with Even Start funds are highly qualified, as defined:
 - All new personnel hired after December 22, 2000 and by December 22, 2004, the majority of the individuals providing academic instruction in existing Even Start programs,
 - shall have obtained an associate's, bachelor's, or graduate degree in a field related to early childhood education, elementary or secondary school education, or adult education; and
 - if applicable, meet qualifications established by the State for early childhood education, elementary or secondary school education, or adult education provided as part of an Even Start program or another family literacy program.
 - The individual responsible for administration of family literacy services provided with federal Even Start funds has received training in the operation of a family literacy program, and

- Paraprofessionals who provide support for academic instruction have a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
6. Providing special training to staff, including child care staff, that develops the skills necessary to work with parents and young children in the full range of instructional services offered as part of the Even Start program;
 7. Providing and monitoring integrated instructional services to participating parents and children through home-based programs;
 8. Operating on a year-round basis, including the provision of instructional and enrichment services during the summer months;
 9. Coordinating programs assisted under Even Start funding with programs assisted under other parts of The No Child Left Behind Act, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (job training), and with the Head Start program, volunteer literacy programs, and other relevant programs;
 10. Using instructional programs based on scientifically based reading research for children and adults, to the extent such research is available;
 11. Encouraging participating families to attend regularly and to remain in the program a sufficient time to meet their program goals;
 12. Including reading readiness activities for preschool children based on scientifically-based reading research, to the extent available, to ensure children enter school ready to learn to read;
 13. When applicable, promoting the continuity of family literacy to ensure that individuals retain and improve their educational outcomes;
 14. Ensuring that the program will service those families most in need of Even Start activities and services; and
 15. Providing an independent local program evaluation to be used for program improvement.